

**Committee of the Whole.** On Saturday, March 13, we will hold a Committee of the Whole meeting; the Common Council and Department Heads will meet for an open discussion about big topics.

The last few years, these meetings have tended to discuss upcoming construction projects. With most of the planned infrastructure projects – streets, sewer and water mains, power lines and substation, wastewater plant – completed the last few years, I expect this year's meeting to focus on issues rather than construction.

There are significant issues that each department will be grappling with in the near- and long-term. And these significant topics should be discussed with the Common Council and Department Heads, so all have at least a working understanding of the issue and its positive and negative aspects.

For example, the police department might share information on the accreditation process it is undertaking and what they expect to get out of it. Or, for example, the ambulance (as well as police and fire) might share information on a county-wide emergency radio communication system that is being discussed by the county and other municipalities.

The meeting is not intended to be a budget meeting. And I don't want to sound some alarmist rhetoric, but there are some financial matters that pose realistic concerns. The state did not actually balance its budget; it has a structural deficit expected to be around \$2 billion when its next biennium starts July 1, 2011. Couple that with the fact that intergovernmental revenues – some earmarked for specific uses – comprise some 29% of the city's general fund. I expect the city will have to cope with tighter budgets in 2011 and 2012, so it is extra important for the Common Council and key staff to understand significant issues and priorities.

**Baseball and Softball.** The City provides recreational baseball and softball programs every summer. These will continue this summer, but there will be some changes. In advance, I want to thank the players, parents, and coaches for their patience and understanding as we work through some changes to the registration process.

In setting the city budget this year, there was a deliberate decision that the baseball and softball programs need to be self-sufficient. They will rely on registration fees and possibly fundraisers to cover all operating costs. The city will continue to provide indirect support through office support and field maintenance.

The T-Ball League is for boys and girls age 4 to 5. We typically have around 12 teams. They play two games per week in June and July; they hit off a tee. The registration fee remains at \$25 this summer.

The Triple A League is for boys and girls age 6 to 7. We typically have around 10 teams. They play two games per week in June and July; a pitching machine is used. The registration fee will be \$40 this summer.

The American League is for boys and girls age 8 to 9. We typically have around 6 teams. They play two games per week in June and July; a pitching machine is used. The registration fee will be \$40 this summer.

The National League is for boys age 10 to 12. We typically have around 4 teams. They play two games per week in May and June; players pitch. The registration fee will be \$40 this summer.

The softball League of Their Own is for girls entering 2nd through 5th grade. They have one game per week in mid May through July. The registration fee remains \$30 this summer.

The softball Traveling League is for girls entering 6th through 9th grade. They have one game per week in mid May through July. As registrations have increased, we expect this to increase to two local teams this year. The registration fee will be \$45 this summer.

Registration forms will be available through the schools, at city hall, and online at [www.ci.evansville.wi.gov](http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov). Registration forms and fees can be completed at city hall (31 South Madison Street) or mailed directly to the city at PO Box 76. The only day that we expect to have registration at the school is April 16 during the Week of the Young Child.

An additional \$5 fee will be added to each registration for non-city residents. Please note this is based on residency within city limits, regardless of school district. As in the past, we will try to match special requests for families or carpooling.

We are currently looking to hire a new Baseball Coordinator to handle the rosters, game schedules, staffing umpires, pre- and post-game field work, and so forth. If interested, please see the job posting on the city website [www.ci.evansville.wi.gov](http://www.ci.evansville.wi.gov).

Again, thank you for your patience while we work through a few changes. If you have any questions, feel free to call me directly at 882-2263.

**Discover Wisconsin.** We have a new Evansville marketing brochure. It was designed with the visitor in mind and mirrors much of Discover Wisconsin's upcoming feature on Evansville.

The brochure includes a calendar of events; list and map of dining, specialty retail, and artist businesses; description of local attractions; and a shortened version of the historic walking tour. And it is designed to fit in a standard #10 envelope without requiring additional postage.

Discover Wisconsin will distribute our brochure at their booth during the Milwaukee Sports Show this March 10-14. They also have exhibits at the Madison Fishing Expo and the Camping & RV Show in Green Bay. We can distribute the brochure to neighboring communities and wayside displays. And, of course, we can use it ourselves at Cobblestone Inn & Suites and other businesses.